



LEROY D. BACA, SHERIFF

County of Los Angeles
Sheriff's Department Headquarters
4700 Ramona Boulevard
Monterey Park, California 91754-2169



May 8, 2007

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**PROPOSED REOPENING OF PITCHESS DETENTION CENTER - SOUTH FACILITY
STATUS OF INMATE RECEPTION CENTER OVERCROWDING**

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (Department), the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), the court appointed *Rutherford* Panel and your Board all share similar visions for the Department's custody operations. These shared goals include a feasible jail management population plan, a streamlined Inmate Reception Center (IRC), a decrease in inmate percentage releases, and a more effective, efficient jail system.

These shared goals are not new ideas; however, achieving these goals are imperative to help the Department better serve the residents of Los Angeles County. Many of these and other similar visions are stalled or were diverted over time due to circumstances that are beyond the Department's control, such as budget constraints, increased bookings, and greater oversight. Our partnership with your Board and the Chief Administrative Office has netted significant results in tackling the vexing legal and operational challenges that face the largest local jail system in the country. Even though great strides have been made, much work remains.

This correspondence serves two purposes: (1) to provide your Board with an update as to what action is being taken to address the overcrowding problem at IRC, and (2) to recommend the full reopening of Pitchess Detention Center (PDC) - South Facility as a mechanism to further relieve the significant stress placed on IRC's inmate processing operation.

A Tradition of Service

INMATE RECEPTION CENTER OVERCROWDING

Recently, litigation, initiated by the ACLU, has centered around jail overcrowding affecting IRC. In addition, it has been difficult for the Department to adjust inmate housing locations and rectify other areas of concern to effectively comply with the *Rutherford* Decision. As such, the Department has identified a number of areas for improvement, which are divided into two categories: current enhancements, and enhancements slated to occur between May 2007 and July 2007.

Current Enhancements

IRC is reexamining and reconfiguring inmate movement patterns and establishing more efficient methods of inmate movement within the facility. It is no longer receiving inmates at random for DNA collection and warrant checks. These events have been placed into a single process which occurs when the inmate is prepared for release. Additionally, IRC has partnered with Correctional Services Division, Transportation Bureau to improve the Direct Busing Program. Once fully implemented, Direct Busing will allow inmates to be transported from PDC, directly to court, and then returned directly to PDC from court. This will reduce the number of inmates that must pass through IRC. Since this is a new program, the bus routes, the units involved, and the logistics behind the program are being closely monitored and adjusted to improve efficiency.

Furthermore, IRC is striving to improve the cleanliness of its holding cells by power washing them once a week and having inmate workers clean each cell when they are unoccupied. Additionally, while the cells are being cleaned, the toilets and sinks are checked to ensure that they are in working condition before the cell is populated. At the direction of the Federal Court, IRC has limited the number of inmates that can be held in the majority of its cells to 20 per cell at any given time. The number cannot exceed 20 without the watch commander's approval, and only under exigent circumstances, for short periods of time.

In an effort to alleviate as much overcrowding as possible, IRC's professional staff continually review inmate court cases to determine bail amounts, so that if the bail has changed and an inmate is eligible for release via a promise to appear citation, that process can be completed in a timely manner.

The Department is also working in conjunction with Sacramento legislators to change current State law to allow the courts to directly sentence people to an Electronic Monitoring Program. Once the law is changed, judges throughout the County will have the ability to directly sentence an inmate to the Electronic Monitoring Program, thus creating more available beds for more serious offenders.

IRC is striving to enroll more inmates into Community Based Alternatives to Custody (CBAC) Programs. These programs include, but are not limited to, work release, work furlough, inmate station workers, and electronic monitoring. Other CBAC programs are also in the developmental stages by IRC personnel. It is believed that additional improvements and inmate assignments to these programs will increase the number of available beds for serious offenders. The Department has already realized some success by more than doubling the number of CBAC participants, since the beginning of February 2007, from 805 to 1,633 inmates.

Finally, the ACLU, through the *Rutherford* Panel discussion process, requested that inmates who are temporarily detained in IRC's clinic overflow area be issued modified indigent kits for personal hygiene. The facility's response to this request involved working with members of the Inmate Services Unit. As of April 27, 2007, all inmates who are temporarily detained in these housing locations began receiving inmate indigent kits upon their arrival at this processing location.

May 2007 - July 2007 Enhancements

On May 8, 2007, IRC began partial implementation of a program to issue inmates long sleeve thermal undershirts. The program is expected to be fully implemented in June 2007. The long sleeve thermal undershirts are currently being purchased; however, the program cannot be fully implemented until the shirts are delivered. This program began due to a complaint brought forward by the ACLU that some of the facility's holding cells are too cold. The temperature in these areas is automatically set between 72 and 74 degrees Fahrenheit. A recent climate control check of the cells and areas of concern revealed that the temperature was indeed between 72 and 74 degrees Fahrenheit. Some inmates find this temperature range uncomfortable, therefore, these inmates will be afforded the opportunity to wear long sleeve thermal undershirts.

Another area of focus involves quality assurance measures that are being developed to ensure accurate inmate location records and that the Department is in compliance with the mandates of the Federal Court, with regard to how long an inmate is detained within IRC. Scanning devices are currently utilized to note the length of time an inmate is assigned at the facility, and these quality assurance improvements will better serve their medical and housing needs.

The reestablishment of the Custody Housing Unit North (CHU North) unit will improve security level housing and inmate safety by ensuring appropriate classifications of inmates are assigned together, particularly at PDC. CHU North will be responsible for housing all inmates at the PDC complex in a timely manner, as well as adjusting the PDC housing matrix to correspond with the needs of IRC and Men's Central Jail, due to the ever changing demographics of the inmate population.

REINSTITUTE FULL OPERATING CAPACITY AT PDC SOUTH FACILITY

In November 2001, PDC South Facility (South Facility) was closed due to budget curtailments. Since that time, South Facility has been partially reopened to provide educational opportunities and various programs to the inmate population. However, instituting full operating capacity at South Facility would effectively aid in relieving overburdened jail facilities.

After the reconfiguration of South Facility to implement inmate programs, the projected bed space is estimated at 1,716 beds. Specifically, as of April 30, 2007, approximately 762 beds were utilized, which included beds for inmates that participated in programming opportunities at South Facility. Operating the complex at full capacity would provide approximately 954 additional beds in a barracks/dormitory style setting. This additional bed space would relieve overcrowding at the other custody facilities, and afford the Department added flexibility to address and resolve *Rutherford* issues raised by the ACLU and other inmate advocacy organizations, while avoiding decreases in incarceration times due to overcrowding.

As a result of the Board's ongoing support, South Facility had 234 beds and 16 positions funded in Fiscal Year (FY) 2004-05 and 50 positions funded in FY 2006-07, due to the reduction in inmate populations at Men's Central Jail as a result of the *Rutherford* mandates. The full reopening of South Facility would require adequate custody and administrative staffing, including appropriate supervision and management (a dedicated captain) as recommended by Crout and Sida Criminal Justice Consultants, at an estimated cost of \$14.6 million for 109 positions and renovation. An additional \$2.7 million would be required for medical services personnel and equipment as outlined in the following section.

Medical Services Bureau

The Department's Medical Services Bureau is in need of additional funding to supply proper staffing levels at South Facility. In order to adequately operate the jail, additional personnel would need to be recruited, hired, and trained. These individuals include 25 civilian medical personnel. The total estimate for onetime expenses and employee salaries is \$2.7 million. A 24-hour on-site nursing staff will be utilized to accommodate the medical needs of the inmates who are housed at South Facility. Another 24-hour on-site medical clinic is located at the North County Correctional Facility (NCCF). However, additional personnel are required and time delays may occur when transporting inmates from South Facility to NCCF. Due to the proposed large inmate population at South Facility, it is imperative that a 24-hour medical clinic is on-site.

Correctional Services Division, Transportation Bureau

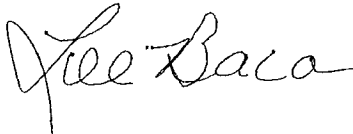
Correctional Services Division, Transportation Bureau (CST) would be affected by the reopening of South Facility. On a daily basis, CST transports between 1,200 and 1,400 inmates from the Department's custody facilities to court.

Based on an average total inmate population count of 20,000 inmates, CST transports between 6 and 7 percent of the total inmate population each day. The addition of the 954 beds would result in a proportionate increase in the number of inmates that would need to be transported from PDC. The Department estimates that an additional 57 to 67 inmates would be transported from South Facility per day.

Therefore, the full reopening of the jail will not substantially affect IRC in regards to the court process. In fact, it will afford IRC and the CHU more options as they work to find housing assignments for new inmates.

As always, the Sheriff's Department, is driven by the challenge to improve efficiency and enhance its ability to manage the inmate population. The Department continues to take a proactive stance on providing the highest quality of service in law enforcement and correctional security. If you have any additional questions or concerns, you may contact Custody Operations Division Chief Sammy L. Jones at (213) 893-5001, or Correctional Services Division Acting Chief Alexander R. Yim at (213) 893-5018.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Leroy D. Baca". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

LEROY D. BACA
SHERIFF